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### **NEWS ADVISORY:**

## ***First-ever agreement opens information superhighway to rural Oregon***

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### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

**THURSDAY, June 3, 1999**

PR 46 99

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**PORTLAND, Ore.** – A first-ever agreement will put the information superhighway within reach for a group of coastal communities. Mayors and representatives from Reedsport and Newport, Ore., Coos, Lane and Lincoln counties and from several Oregon economic development groups will attend a signing ceremony:

**Wednesday, June 9, 1999, 10 a.m.**

### **Lane Substation, 28190 K.R. Nielson Road, Eugene OR**

They hope the agreement will help diversify the economy and upgrade communications for schools, hospitals, libraries and other public services in their coastal communities. The upgrade should offset jobs lost to downturns in the fishing and timber industries.

Jack Robertson, deputy administrator for the Bonneville Power Administration, and Randall Kowalke, chairman of the Economic Development Alliance of Lincoln County, will sign the agreement.

Fiber optics – with its bounty of the Internet, high-speed computers and e-commerce – is becoming a fact of life for Oregon cities where it is replacing telephone wires and co-axial cable as the main source of data and information. But that's not so for rural areas where the low number of users per mile makes the cost of installing fiber optics cable too expensive. The agreement is the first step to put rural areas on par with urban areas.

Lane Substation is the hub for a fiber optics route that will run from the suburbs of Eugene to Florence, Ore., and down to near Coos Bay. Workers will install fiber optic cable on an existing BPA transmission line. BPA will use the cable to operate part of the Northwest's transmission grid. The agreement sets aside some of the fibers for communities along the route.

To reach Lane Substation, take I-5 south to Belt Line Road. At the intersection of Belt Line and W. 11<sup>th</sup> Street (Highway 126) turn right (west). Go 1.5 miles and angle left onto K.R. Nielson Road. Travel 0.5 miles west to the substation.

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